HISTORY 3265F
Racism in Canadian History

Fall 2023
Wednesdays, 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location: STVH 1155

Instructor: Professor Keith Fleming
Email: kfleming@uwo.ca
Office: Department of History, Lawson Hall 1208
Office hours: Wednesdays, 3:30 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

This is a draft syllabus. Please see the course site on OWL for a final version.

Course Description:
A survey of racism in Canadian society from the eighteenth century to the present, including the racist targeting of Canada’s Black, Chinese, Indigenous, Japanese, Jewish, Muslim, and South Asian communities, focusing specifically on institutional racism. Governmental and citizen-based anti-racism initiatives are also studied.

Prerequisite:
1.0 History course at the 2200 level or above

Course Syllabus:
This seminar course is an introduction to the history of racism in Canada. Although popular sentiment within Canada long maintained that it was a country largely devoid of racial prejudice and systemic discrimination, particularly in comparison to its American neighbour, an abundance of historical evidence demonstrates otherwise. Through examining the racist targeting of Canada’s Black, Chinese, Indigenous, Japanese, Jewish, Muslim, and South Asian communities, this course documents a legacy of racism in Canadian history reaching back to the eighteenth century. Attention is devoted at the beginning of the course to developing a specific understanding of the prejudicial attitudes and discriminatory practices, institutions and structures that perpetuate inequalities and are properly defined as ‘racist.’ Although racist behaviours occupy a broad continuum – ranging from covert and subtle insinuation to explicit and extreme violence – a primary focus in this course is on recurring examples of institutional racism (for example, restrictive immigration regulations imposed upon particular ethnic groups, or governmental policies constraining Indigenous peoples) that marginalized, excluded, segregated, and dominated racialized minorities in Canada. Much of the history studied in this course is upsetting. We approach this history by following the lead of George M. Fredrickson, a leading scholar in the field, who advised that “the responsibility of the historian … who studies racism is not to moralize and condemn but to understand this malignancy so that it can be more effectively treated” (from Racism: A Short History, Princeton University Press, 2015, p. 158).
LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Students will be able to
- identify major events, concepts, minority groups, and personalities that constitute Canada’s history of racism
- define clearly and apply judiciously to Canada’s history core concepts such as ‘racism,’ racist,’ and ‘racialization’
- interpret information about a wide range of people, groups, events, and documents discussed in the assigned readings and explain their significance
- strengthen skills of oral and written communication
- analyze primary and secondary sources, including their origins, methods, arguments, strengths, limitations, potential implications, and significance for the study of racism in Canadian history
- solve research problems by identifying a topic, refining it to a significant and answerable historical question, determining the essential components of the argument, organizing the parts of the essay, and drawing conclusions
- effectively integrate primary and secondary sources within class presentations, discussions, and research essays
- analyze academically the impact of historical precedents that contextualize present-day racism in Canada

Course Materials:
The course **Required Readings** are available either in digital format at the Western Libraries site for History 3265F (which can be accessed via the ‘Course Readings’ link on the course OWL website), or on two-hour reserve at D.B. Weldon Library.
The book for review, George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton University Press, 2015), is available for purchase through the University Book Store or various on-line retailers and is on two-hour reserve at D.B. Weldon Library.

Methods of Evaluation:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book Review (due Friday September 28th)</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay Proposal (due Wednesday October 11th)</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Essay (due Friday November 24th)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Primary Source Presentation and Report</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>25%</td>
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**Students must pass all elements of the course (book review; research essay proposal; research essay; primary source presentation and report; seminar participation; final examination) to achieve a passing grade in the course.**

Each student will write a **scholarly book review** (6-7 typewritten pages in length) of George M. Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* (Princeton University Press, 2015). An electronic copy of the completed book review must be submitted via the course OWL website no later than Friday 28 September 2023 at 11:55 p.m. In addition, the book review must be submitted by the due date and time to Turnitin.com via the course OWL website.

Each student must submit electronically to kfleming@uwo.ca a formal and brief (1-2 page typewritten) essay proposal no later than Wednesday October 11th at 1:30 p.m. Students who fail to meet this deadline will not be permitted to submit an essay and will receive a grade of “0” on the assignment. Approved essay topics cannot subsequently be changed without the instructor’s prior consent.

Each student will write a research essay (13-15 typewritten pages in length). Essay topics will be assigned by the instructor in consultation with each student. An electronic copy of the completed research essay must be submitted via the course OWL website no later than Friday 24 November 2023 at 11:55 p.m. In addition, the essay must be submitted by the due date and time to Turnitin.com via the course OWL website.

Each student, in consultation with the instructor, will make a 15-minute seminar presentation discussing a minimum of three primary sources that the student has identified as providing clarity and context to central themes in that week’s required readings. The types of sources to be consulted could include, but are not limited to, government documents, speeches, newspaper articles, personal diaries, excerpts from novels, advertisements, photographs and other illustrations, or radio and television broadcasts. Presentations must not exceed the maximum 15-minute allotment. An electronic copy of the primary source presentation and accompanying written report must be submitted to kfleming@uwo.ca no later than noon on the day that the class presentation takes place. In addition to including all images of the primary sources being discussed in class, the written report must describe your reasons for selecting those primary sources and how they provide clarity and context to the week’s assigned readings. The written report should be approximately 5 pages in length. The course instructor will post the primary source presentation on the “Resources” section of the History 3265F OWL website for other students in the course to access prior to the presentation being made.

A 3-hour final examination, to be held during the December examination period, will cover all course required readings and lecture content. Electronic devices are not allowed during examinations. Make-up tests, midterms, and exams can only be approved by Academic Counselling. Please see https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html for department procedures and requirements involving make-up tests and exams.

A late penalty of 5% for the first day and 2% per day thereafter (weekends included) will be assessed against written work (including the book review; research essay; and primary source presentation report) submitted after the due date.

Students are expected to attend and participate actively in all seminar discussions, thereby demonstrating their comprehension of the Required Readings. This course syllabus also lists numerous Supplementary Readings which students are not required to read but are useful for examining in greater detail the weekly discussion topics. Sample discussion questions based on the Required Readings will be posted on the History 3265G OWL website (under the ‘Resources’ link) before each class to assist students in preparing to participate meaningfully in the seminar. All students will be assigned a participation grade on a 10-point scale following each seminar. Failure to attend a seminar will result in a score of “0” for that class. Merely attending a seminar without participating in the discussion will result in a score of “2” for that class. The assignment of a participation grade from “3” to “10” will be determined by the quality of the student’s contributions to discussion during any given seminar.

In instances when absence from class is unavoidable, students are expected, when possible, to inform the instructor in advance of their pending absence.
Non-illness absences from seminars are unacceptable. Any student attending fewer than nine of the twelve scheduled discussion seminars (an absence rate of approximately 25%) for non-illness reasons will be assigned a failing grade for seminar participation and a failing grade in the course.

**NOTE:** All work submitted in this course must be your own. You may not make use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT for any assignments in this course.

**Course Schedule and Readings:**

**Session One: Wednesday 13 September 2023**  
Introduction to History 3265F

**Session Two: Wednesday 20 September 2023**  
**Topic:** Defining Racism and Racialization

**Required Readings:**


**Session Three: Wednesday 27 September 2023**  
**Topic:** Anti-Indigenous Racism (Part I)

**Required Readings:**


**Supplementary Readings:**


**Review of Fredrickson, *Racism: A Short History* due Friday September 28th**
Session Four: Wednesday 4 October 2023
Topic: Anti-Indigenous Racism (Part II)

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


J.R. Miller, Residential Schools and Reconciliation: Canada Confronts Its History (University of Toronto Press, 2017).

Session Five: Wednesday 11 October 2023
Topic: Anti-Black Racism (Part I)

Required Readings:
Kristin McLaren, “‘We Had No Desire to be Set Apart’: Forced Segregation of Black Students in Canada West Public Schools and Myths of British Egalitarianism,” in Barrington Walker, ed., The History of Immigration and Racism in Canada: Essential Readings (Canadian Scholars’ Press Inc., 2008), pp. 69-81.


Karolyn Smardz Frost, “Planting Slavery in Nova Scotia’s Promised Land, 1759-1775,” in Michele A. Johnson and Funké Aladejebi, eds., Unsettling the Great White North: Black Canadian History (University of Toronto Press, 2022), pp. 53-84

Supplementary Readings:


Michele A. Johnson and Funké Aladejebi, eds., Unsettling the Great White North: Black Canadian History (University of Toronto Press, 2022).

Research Essay Proposal due Wednesday October 11th

Session Six: Wednesday 18 October 2023
Topic: Anti-Black Racism (Part II)

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


Session Seven: Wednesday 25 October 2023
Topic: Antisemitic Racism

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:
Session Eight: Wednesday 8 November 2023
Topic: Anti-Chinese Racism

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:

Session Nine: Wednesday 15 November 2023
Topic: Anti-Japanese Racism

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:

Session Ten: Wednesday 22 November 2023
Topic: Anti-South Asian Racism

Required Readings:

Supplementary Readings:

Research Essay due Wednesday November 24th

Session Eleven: Wednesday 29 November 2023:
Topic: Anti-Muslim Racism

Required Readings:

Session Twelve: Wednesday 6 December 2023
Topic: Governmental Apologies and Anti-Racism Measures

Required Readings:


Stephen Harper, “Prime Minister Harper Offers Full Apology for the Chinese Head Tax, June 22, 2006”:

https://www.rcaane-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1100100015644/1571589171655

Justin Trudeau, “Komagata Maru apology in the House of Commons, May 18, 2016”:

“Justin Trudeau’s Apology to Residential School Survivors in Newfoundland, November 24, 2017:

“Justin Trudeau’s Apology on Behalf of the Government of Canada to the Passengers of the MS St. Louis, November 7, 2018”:

“Justin Trudeau’s Apology on Behalf of the Government of Canada to Inuit for the Management of the Tuberculosis Epidemic from the 1940s-1960s, March 8, 2019”:

“Justin Trudeau’s Apology for the Internment of Italian Canadians During World War II, May 27, 2021”:


Supplementary Readings:
Ontario’s Anti-Racism Strategic Plan: https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-anti-racism-strategic-plan
Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate: [https://www.ontario.ca/page/anti-racism-directorate](https://www.ontario.ca/page/anti-racism-directorate)

**Additional Statements:**

Please review the Department of History’s shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at: [https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html](https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html)

for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.